



Course Introduction





The Open University

A219 Exploring the Classical World

Course Introduction

Felix Budelmann and Phil Perkins

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Introduction

Welcome to A219 *Exploring the Classical World*. There will be many different reasons why you have chosen this course. You may have a lifelong fascination with the ancient world, and hope to deepen it on this course. Or you may know very little about it and are curious to know more. Alternatively, you may have been prompted by some of the many aspects of the Classical world that are present in our world today, be it physical remains, theatre, films, books, words or ideas.

This introduction has three main parts:

- 1 **The course** is the shortest. It will give you a quick overview of how the course is designed, and how you will be studying.
- 2 **How to explore the Classical world** will discuss what it means to 'explore the Classical world'. Much of this section will be taken up by the crucial issue of sources: what sources about the Classical world do we have at our disposal and how best can we use them?
- 3 **Beginning to explore** will start by looking at the basic parameters of time and space, helping you to develop a grasp of the Classical world in general before you start looking at specific periods and places in the main body of the course.

1 The course

1.1 Learning outcomes

This is a gateway course for Classical Studies (hence the various gates and openings on the covers of your course materials) and the main aim of the course is – obviously – to enable you to explore the Classical world. However, it is worth being more precise about what we hope will be the outcomes for you, in terms of both knowledge and skills.

We hope that you will:

- 1 acquire a broad knowledge of the political, social and cultural history, as well as the geography, of the Classical world;
- 2 acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the various disciplines that make up Classical Studies, and develop your ability to practise the methods of enquiry used by these disciplines;
- 3 develop your ability to examine critically different kinds of ancient material and modern interpretations of this material;
- 4 develop skills to communicate your knowledge and understanding in an appropriately scholarly manner.

The details of what you will learn will vary from block to block, and we will specify those details for specific blocks (and sometimes parts within blocks). But these are the overarching objectives.

The first objective is probably the most obvious: after all, you will no doubt want to learn something about the Classical world. We have phrased it here in terms of history and geography to capture the notions of a world that is far away in time and place. We could also have used terms such as 'art' or 'literature', which we have included under 'cultural history'. However you phrase it, this course is here for you to gain knowledge about the Classical world.

The second objective will be explored in Section 2.2. The discipline that studies the Classical world, Classical Studies, is really a group of

disciplines. Exploring the Classical world brings together historians, archaeologists, literary critics, art historians, philologists, philosophers and other kinds of scholars. So you will come to acquire not just knowledge about the Classical world, but also the skills of the various disciplines that explore it.

The third objective will be the subject of Section 2.3. We don't have first-hand experience of the Classical world, but rely on various kinds of ancient sources and modern sources. Exploiting both kinds of sources effectively is an essential skill needed for exploring the Classical world, and one you will practise throughout the course.

The fourth objective – communicating your insights – is just as crucial a part of taking this course as acquiring these insights in the first place. You will practise your skills in this respect during your interactions with your tutor and fellow students (see Section 1.5). A vital aspect of your interaction with your tutor and of your discussions in tutorials will be five assignments which you will be required to submit. These assignments are therefore called TMAs, short for 'tutor-marked assignments' (see Section 1.6).

It's worth reminding yourself of these learning objectives once in a while. This will help you make the most of the course, and will stand you in good stead when writing your TMAs, as well as in the end-of-course examination, which will be the culmination of your learning programme.

1.2 Course structure and content

The course follows a broadly chronological framework, starting with the early Greeks and ending with the Roman empire. However, it isn't a 'survey' course: it doesn't try to teach you a little bit about *everything* in the Classical world. That would be a rather frustrating task as you wouldn't have time to explore anything in any depth. Instead, the course focuses on four particular areas and periods of the Classical world, while providing the necessary material to help you place them in a larger context.

The course is structured as follows:

Week 1 Course Introduction

You are already reading this. At the end of the week, you will do your first CMA ('computer-marked assignment'). You will find more information in the Assignment Book.

CMA 51 (Week 1)

Weeks 2–6 Block 1 Homer and the Greek 'Dark Age'

This block focuses on one of the earliest periods of Classical history: the time of the Greek epic poets, especially Homer. Aspects of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are studied at some length, building up to a picture of Homeric society and artistry. Looking at pots of the same period on DVD will add a further dimension to your understanding of the period.

TMA 01 (Week 3) and TMA 02 (Week 7)

Weeks 8–12 Block 2 Classical Athens

This block looks at Athens in the fifth century BCE. You will study four sources: Aeschylus' tragedy *Persians*; arts and buildings on the Acropolis; oratory; and Aristophanes' comedy *Lysistrata*. These sources have a shared focus: the Athenians' understanding of their own identity as Athenians. (Note: please be aware that Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* contains some fairly strong sexual slang words in the translation we use from the ancient Greek. We'd like to forewarn you of this before you approach the play.)

TMA 03 (Week 13)

Weeks 15–20 Block 3 The Roman republic

This block starts with an introduction to the second half of the course, linking the Greek world studied in Blocks 1 and 2 with the study of cultural developments in Italy, starting with the experience and physical remains of Greek colonisation of southern Italy. The next part of the block investigates politics and power in the Roman republic. A concluding section considers how the various kinds of literature produced at the time contribute to the definition of a distinctive Roman culture.

CMA 52 (Week 15) and TMA 04 (Week 21)

Weeks 22–26 Block 4 Rome – city and people

This block turns to social history. You will learn about the population of Rome, how it was organised socially and what daily and family life in Rome were like. Your main sources will include the letters of Pliny the Younger and Cicero, the philosophy of Seneca, and inscriptions on tombstones.

TMA 05 (Weeks 28–29)

Weeks 30–31 Block 5 Revision and retrospection

In addition, there is a shorter fifth block, devoted to revision and retrospection. The first week takes the form of a case study designed to pull together threads which run through the course and, in particular, to practise and remind you of the use of primary evidence. The second week is devoted to preparing for the end-of-course examination.

1.3 Course materials

The backbone of the course is five books, one for each block. You will work through these books in sequence; throughout, you will be referred to other course materials wherever appropriate.

The other course materials are as follows. (Whenever you are required to consult them, the appropriate icon will appear in the margin. You may also find it rewarding to browse through them at this stage, to get a feel for all the components.)



- *Exploring the Classical World*. This is a purpose-written book to accompany the course. It contains nine essays, plus an introduction, on topics relating to the course.



- *Readings Books 1 and 2*. These contain longer texts to which you will be directed as you work through the blocks.



- Two *Illustrations Books*, one covering Blocks 1–2 and one covering Blocks 3–5. Some illustrations are included in the blocks, but in order to achieve a higher print quality, others are provided in these books.



- *CDs and DVDs*. There are five audio CDs and four DVDs. The audio-visual materials are integral parts of the course, just as important as the rest of the teaching materials. It is essential that you have regular access to a CD player and a DVD player (or a computer providing these functions). The nature of the material is varied. The CDs include interactive exercises, recordings of plays and readings; and the DVDs include footage of visual source material, commentary on this material, and interviews. Instructions for listening to or watching specific tracks are provided in the blocks where appropriate. Details of CD and DVD contents and some further material are provided in the Audio-Visual Notes. All tracks have running time codes, which enable you to refer to specific sequences, both when you take notes and when you discuss

them in TMAs (just as you would use line or page numbers when you refer to print material).

- *eDesktop*. You will have received a letter setting out details about how to use the eDesktop, so we will only state the most important points here. The eDesktop gives you access to various kinds of electronic resources, both those specific to this course and those more generally available. To use it you will need a computer with internet access. Since you may need to make special arrangements to access the internet, we have designed the course in such a way that you will need to use the eDesktop only at specific points; however, you may wish to use it more frequently of your own accord. On the eDesktop, you will find (among other things):
 - (a) *Course resources*. Links to electronic versions (in pdf-format) of many of the course materials, which are searchable, a function that you may find useful when you try to find something but don't remember where you read it.
 - (b) *ICT*. A link to three ICT resources developed for this course: a map application, timelines and a pronunciation guide (see Section 3).
 - (c) *Library resources*. Links to various library resources including MyOpenLibrary, a collection of resources provided by the Open University Library, such as online image collections, encyclopedia and journals (see Section 2.3).
 - (d) *Conferencing*. Links to a student conference (FirstClass), which will be set up during the early stages of the course by OUSA, the Open University Student Association.
 - (e) *Course links*. Links to suggested websites for use at particular points of the course.
- *Assignment Book and Specimen Examination Paper (SEP)* (see Section 1.6).
- *Study Calendar*. This gives you a week-by-week overview of the course, setting out the blocks, CD and DVD tracks, ICT resources and assignments that you will be working on.



1.4 Set books

There are five set books for the course:

- Pomeroy, S.B., Burstein, S.M., Donlan, W. and Roberts, J.T. (2004) *A Brief History of Ancient Greece: Politics, Society and Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hornblower, S. and Spawforth, A. (eds) (1998) *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Radice, B. (trans.) (1969) *The Letters of Pliny the Younger*, London: Penguin.
- Lattimore, R. (trans.) (2002) *The Odyssey of Homer*, London: HarperCollins.
- Beard, M. and Crawford, M. (1999) *Rome in the Late Republic*, London: Duckworth.



You should buy your own copy of the set books. (We will be discussing how to use them in Section 2.3.) Note also that the course authors will often abbreviate these books in their writing to: BHAG, the OCCC, Pliny Letters, Lattimore, and Beard and Crawford. When referring to these sources, the

text will also display marginal icons, as above, to help you easily identify which outside material you will need as you work.

1.5 Study and tuition

If you have taken other Open University courses, you may already be used to the fact that you will do most of your work by yourself. At the centre of the course are the books of five blocks which you will work through individually. However, you won't just be reading uninterrupted discussions, or 'lectures on paper'. Rather, you will often be pointed to other course materials: written materials, DVDs, CDs, and so on.

Furthermore, you will break regularly for various kinds of clearly specified exercises. Sometimes these exercises will ask you to make written notes, but most of them don't specify this. Either way, it's important that you use these opportunities for developing your skills, knowledge and understanding. Almost all exercises are followed by a discussion, and we're aware that there is a temptation for you simply to read on, especially if you have little time. However, we urge you not to do that, for at least two reasons. First of all, pure reading, no matter how alert, isn't the most effective way of learning. You need more active input of your own. Secondly, the discussion rarely contains the 'right answer'. Only a minority of the exercises have one obvious answer. Most of the focus is on complex or subjective issues on which there are numerous perspectives. The discussion gives you the perspective of the member of the course team in question; it won't give you your own.

As an OU student, you won't be alone. You will be allocated a tutor who will get in touch with you soon (if they haven't done so already). Your tutor will lead the tutorials to which you will be invited, give you feedback on your assignments, and help you prepare for the examination at the end of the course. He or she will also be available to help you (by phone or email, as well as in person at tutorials) with any queries you may have about the academic content of the course and your own progress and achievement. You should see the interactions with your tutor throughout the course as an integral part of your work. The learning materials, even though for the most part self-explanatory, have been put together with a view to the fact that you will not just study by yourself, but also through contact with your tutor. In addition, students often form self-help groups. These can be a useful further forum for discussion.

The scheduling of tutorials and other administrative matters are arranged by your local regional office. Each region has its own student support staff who are there to help you. You can also find information online – your personal page on StudentHome is the best place to start looking.

1.6 Assessment

There are three types of assessment on this course:

1 Two CMAs (Weeks 1 and 15)

As the name suggests, CMAs ('computer-marked assignments') consist of multiple-choice questions, marked by a computer. They are 'formative', that is to say they don't count towards your overall grade.¹ CMA 51 focuses on factual matters of geography. CMA 52, at the beginning of the second half of the course, helps you assess the knowledge and skills you have acquired in the first half.

¹(The CMAs are numbered CMA 51 and 52, rather than 01 and 02, because this enables the computer to identify them more easily.)

2 **Five TMAs (Weeks 3, 7, 13, 21 and 28–29)**

The TMAs ('tutor-marked assignments') have the following weightings (as a percentage of the overall TMA score):

TMA 01 10%

TMA 02 15%

TMA 03 20%

TMA 04 25%

TMA 05 30%

The weighting increases because the sophistication as well as the length of the TMAs increase as you go through the course.

All CMAs and TMAs are set out in the Assignment Book, where you will also find cut-off dates and further details. You may want to look at it sooner rather than later to help you plan for your assignments.

Because there are only five TMAs, there is no possibility of substitution. If you are afraid you may run out of time before a TMA deadline, do not hesitate to contact your tutor to discuss what to do. Even if you know that your TMA is not as perfectly finished as it might be, it is always best to submit something rather than nothing.

3 **A written examination at the end of the course**

The examination will consist of a three-hour paper, divided into two parts. The first part will contain four short-comment questions focused on a text or image (one from each of Blocks 1–4), and the second part will contain four essay questions (one from each of Blocks 1–4). You will be required to choose two questions from each part. Block 5 and especially the Specimen Examination Paper (SEP) will provide further details about the examination.

1.7 **Conventions and ancient spellings**

Anyone writing about the Classical world needs to make various choices concerning consistency.

- *Years.* The course team have opted for BCE ('Before the Common Era') and CE ('Common Era') to refer to dates (we use them in the same way as the more traditional BC and AD.) In some of the set books you will encounter the use of BC and AD instead, and you are welcome to use either convention, as long as you are consistent. Remember that BCE years (as opposed to CE years) count backwards. Therefore the year 431 BCE is earlier than the year 404 BCE.
- *Names.* Many Greek (and some Latin) names have more than one English equivalent. For instance, you will find Achilles as well as Akhilleus, Thucydides as well as Thoukydides. The reason is that there are different conventions for transliterating words from Greek into the English alphabet. In this course we have tended to use what is often called 'Latinised' spelling, for example, 'c' rather than 'k', and 'ae' rather than 'ai', although some of the books you will read (e.g. the translation of the *Odyssey*) use 'k' rather than 'c', and so on. However, the difference is not important: both are correct. Again, you can choose which convention you adopt, as long as you are consistent. Opt for either Achilles or Akhilleus, and stick to it.
- *Ancient terms.* On occasion it will be important to use Greek or Latin terms, usually because there is no English equivalent. The convention

is to put these into italics, such as *agora* (the marketplace in Greek cities) or *virtus* (the ancestor of English ‘virtue’, but not covering quite the same range of meanings). Usually we will give these words in the singular; if we use the plural, we will usually make that explicit. The online pronunciation guide (see Section 3) will give you the confidence that you are saying the words in the right way if you use them in conversation or tutorials.

1.8 The course team

Charlotte Adams	Editor
Colin Andrews	Block author
Rob Barnes	Software developer
Hannah Brunt	Graphic designer
Felix Budelmann	Course team chair and block author
Dorothy Calderwood	Editor
Martin Chiverton	Sound and vision producer
Chris Emlyn-Jones	Block and essay author
Fabienne Evans	Course manager
Trevor Fear	Block author
Lin Foxhall	External assessor
Janis Gilbert	Graphic artist
Lorna Hardwick	Block and essay author
Pip Harris	Compositor
Janet Huskinson	Block author
Valerie Hope	Block and essay author
Paula James	Essay author
Deborah Mairs	Course assistant
Phil Perkins	Course team chair; block and essay author
Carolyn Price	Essay author
James Robson	Block and essay author
Simon Rodwell	Media project manager
Maureen Street	Proofreader
Martin Thorpe	Block author and tutor assessor
Steve Woodward	Block author and tutor assessor
Naoko Yamagata	Block and essay author

2 How to explore the Classical world

2.1 Introducing the course

It's time to get a little closer to our topic: the Classical world. We will start off with an exercise in the format used throughout this course (see Section 1.5).

Exercise



Watch DVD1, Section 1: ‘Introduction to the course’ now.

Discussion

The DVD introduction should have spoken for itself, but it's worth drawing out a couple of general points that have come up (both relating to the theme of the past in the present):

- 1 The DVD brings out what you probably were already aware of before: the remains of the Classical world are substantial and varied. They are to be found in different parts of the modern world. The remains also come from a range of periods, spanning well over a thousand years. Evidence from the Classical world takes many different forms: stones, bones, words, images and ideas, to name just a few. We are rather fortunate in this respect; anyone wishing to explore the Classical world is almost spoilt for choice. This variety will be discussed further in the next section.
 - 2 Then there is the challenge of moving from the present day to what the Classical world may have been like back then. The Parthenon has survived up to the present day, but it is partly in ruins now, and is a tourist attraction rather than a place of worship. How do we get from there to the society that built it? This move from the Classical world that endures today, to the Classical world that once was, is one you will have to make throughout this course. Section 2.3 will lay the foundations by discussing the sources of evidence for the Classical world that we have at our disposal.
-

2.2 An initial exploration

To begin your own exploration of the Classical world, first of all read the introduction to the book of essays, *Experiencing the Classical World*. It has been written not only to introduce the essays in the book, but also to introduce *you* to some of the fundamentals of Classical Studies.



Exercise

As you read the essay, tick off the following course learning outcomes each time you meet a section of the introduction which addresses that outcome:

- 1 acquire a broad knowledge of the political, social and cultural history, as well as the geography, of the Classical world;
- 2 acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the various disciplines that make up Classical Studies, and develop your ability to practise the methods of enquiry used by these disciplines;
- 3 develop your ability to examine critically different kinds of ancient material and modern interpretations of this material;
- 4 develop skills to communicate your knowledge and understanding in an appropriately scholarly manner.

Discussion

The aim of this exercise was to make you think about what you were learning, as you were reading. Such reflection helps you to focus on topics as you learn and also to realise just what it is that you have learned. You should have been able to tick off each one without too much trouble.

Obviously, you haven't had much chance to develop a 'broad knowledge and understanding' quite yet, but you've made a start, and we hope that you came away from the introduction having learned

and understood some new things about the Classical world. Similarly, you might not have had much chance to develop your powers of critical examination, but you were given some examples of looking at images of artefacts and ancient sources that provide you with an idea of what you will be learning to do throughout the course. Source analysis, as it is called in shorthand, is a fundamental skill in Classical Studies. You will practise and develop it throughout the course material, tutorials and TMAs. The results of source analysis can then be organised into a discussion and argument to communicate your knowledge and understanding. The introduction didn't actually give you the opportunity to do the communicating, but the case study within it did provide an example of an argument about the significance of the *curia* of Pompey, drawn from the analysis of a variety of sources. Later in the course, it will be your turn to develop and communicate arguments drawn from source analysis.

The introduction also emphasises how exploration of the Classical world can be an interdisciplinary study, and promises more in the following essays. However, there is no single interdisciplinary approach. The selection and combination of subdisciplines and how they may be used together varies, depending on the questions being asked and the material being studied. The introduction will have given you an impression of the enormous range of possibilities for studying the Classical world. No surprise then, that you can't do it all in one course. The course will not cover everything; it does not attempt to provide you with an overview of the whole Classical world. Instead, it focuses upon some important and interesting places and periods, and investigates them at the same time as developing skills that you will then be able to apply to other parts of the Classical world which are not present in this course.

2.3 The use of sources

As you saw in the DVD and the introduction to the essays, engagement with the evidence from and about the Classical world that we can still access lies at the heart of exploring the Classical world (as indeed any other place or period in the past). Work with sources will be a constant feature of this course. This section, therefore, introduces you to the available sources, and to ways of working with them.

We'll begin by discussing the different types of sources; later you will have the opportunity to practise how best to use sources. Figure 1 below outlines schematically what follows. It's important to stress that it is a schematic simplification, and you should not rely on it without reading the accompanying discussion, but we hope it provides a helpful starting point. (Note that the list of sources is not necessarily exhaustive: you may come across other types of sources in your studies.)

The most crucial distinction to make is between ancient sources (the past that survives), and modern scholarship (modern accounts of the past). As indicated in the diagram, they are sometimes called 'primary' and 'secondary' sources respectively, though one needs to be careful. 'Primary' is the most immediate source we have, while 'secondary' sources are in turn based on the earlier primary sources. More often than not, the ancient source is primary, and the modern source or better, modern scholarship, is secondary. However, it is worth keeping in mind that you might find an

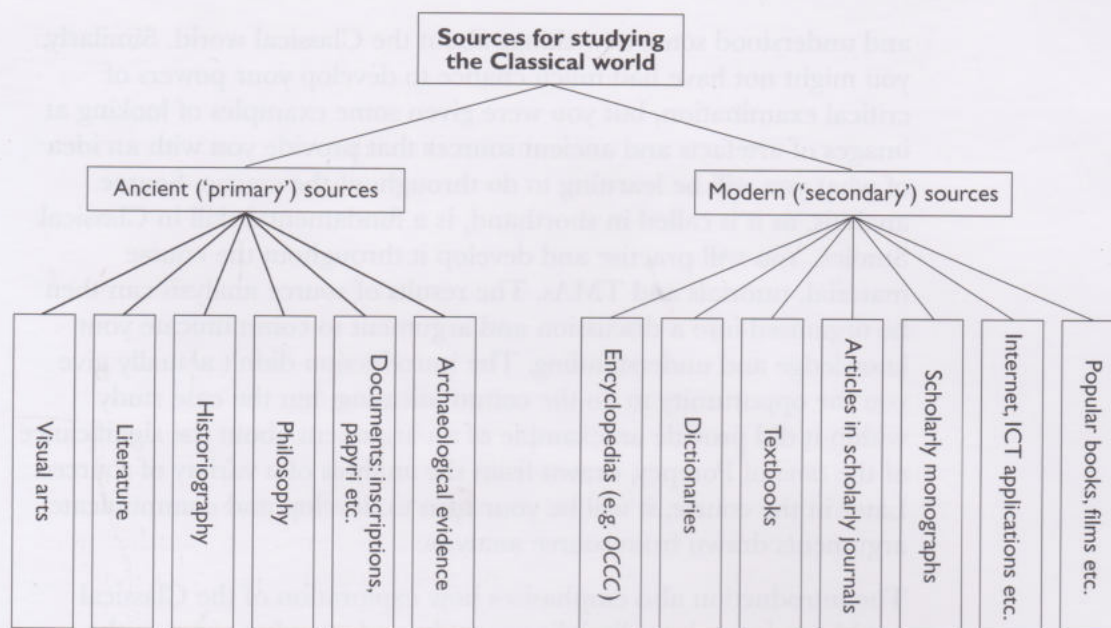


Figure 1 Sources for studying the Classical world.

ancient source that itself depends upon an even earlier ancient source. The later source will then be both primary and secondary simultaneously: primary because it is ancient and secondary because it derives from an earlier source. Such a source can be called an 'ancient secondary source'. An ancient secondary source might be a history of earlier events written in the ancient period, derived from earlier sources that now no longer survive, and so paradoxically an ancient secondary source can also be a primary source. That's why we tend to use the terms 'ancient' and 'modern', rather than 'primary' and 'secondary'. Whatever the terminology used, it's becoming clear that sources are far from straightforward. But perhaps we are getting ahead of ourselves here. Let's pause for a moment and consider what we mean by a 'source'.

Ancient sources

As you have seen, exploring the Classical world is an interdisciplinary pursuit. Perhaps the most immediately obvious aspect of this interdisciplinary approach is that you will confront different kinds of ancient sources, often simultaneously, since one of them by itself may not be sufficient for answering a particular question you may have. Quite apart from whether a source is ancient or modern, the different disciplines that make up Classical Studies use different kinds of source material. Each of them has different characteristics, which you will need to keep in mind when working with them. The following list is not exhaustive, but it should include most of what you will encounter in this course.

Archaeological evidence

This feels in some ways like the most 'real' source – where you can almost touch the Classical world, and where you get a sense of what the Classical world looked like. Classical archaeology covers a wide range of areas: not just buildings like the Parthenon or the temples at Paestum, but also cities, landscapes, graves, coins, battlefields, everyday items, plant and animal remains, ancient rubbish and much else. Archaeology often throws up evidence where literature doesn't. People, after all, use things and change the way the world looks, even when they don't commit themselves to

writing. In fact, for certain periods, such as very early Greece in which there was little or no writing, archaeological evidence is the only contemporary evidence. Similarly, many aspects of everyday life, on which literature is not very vocal, can be explored much further through archaeological evidence.

Perhaps the thing to watch out for most carefully with archaeological evidence is a tendency to assume that the very 'realness' of things surviving from the past gives one immediate access to what that past was like. Archaeological evidence needs to be interpreted just as much as literature, and interpretation is required at a number of levels. Many human actions or events create a physical change in the world: the building of a stone temple is a deliberate creation of a lasting monument for religious and social purposes, whereas the loss of a coin is a casual accident followed by an unsuccessful search for the coin. These different events both changed the world in a way that an archaeologist can detect, but each had a different significance and effect in the past that require interpretation. Furthermore, every single thing that survives from the past has undergone a series of physical and circumstantial transformations in order to survive into the present.

The Parthenon, for example, is no longer in pristine condition. The stone has weathered and its painted decoration is lost; it has been transformed into a church and later an arsenal which exploded; sculptures have been removed and parts have been rebuilt and replaced, to make the building safe and more presentable as a monument to Greek achievement; and doubtless it has suffered several earthquakes along the way! The Parthenon may be a spectacular example, but everything is transformed by time: organic materials decay, buildings are demolished, and tombs robbed. All such transformations need to be assessed and appreciated by archaeologists, and that's before even asking what it all means. The final act of interpretation – attempting to communicate an understanding of the significance and meaning of the evidence – can also be a matter for debate.

Here is an example, drawn from burials, one of the major sources of archaeological evidence for the Classical world. In Attica, the area around Athens, the number of graves decreased significantly in the course of the Archaic period. Many archaeologists assume that this reflects a corresponding decrease in the Athenian population, and have speculated about reasons (the Greek population at large seems to have increased by contrast). They may well be right, but another group of archaeologists have a different explanation for the burial pattern: they say that society became more stratified, increasingly burying only the élite, so that evidence of these burials is the only thing which survives. Not a population decrease then, but a more prominent class system. The debate still continues and probably shows two things: first, the great potential of archaeological evidence, allowing conclusions about social aspects such as class; but also, secondly, the need for interpretation. Not even archaeology gives immediate access to the Classical world.

The visual arts

These are closely related to archaeology. They, too, are things we can look at and touch after all. The difference is very much one of interpretation. Are the Parthenon statues art or archaeology; is an ancient painted pot art or archaeology? In order to avoid such questions, many people use the term 'material culture' to cover both. For many purposes, the difference doesn't matter. In fact, it is a good illustration of the advantages of interdisciplinary work, with different kinds of approach illustrating the same issues. Like

archaeology, visual arts can tell you things that literature can't, but still it is necessary to read the visual language, interpreting the meaning of the images and reconstructing a visual narrative if appropriate.

Using the word 'arts' evokes ideas of aesthetic appreciation and beauty, but the visual arts, like archaeology, and all other kinds of evidence, need to be interpreted, and interpreted in different ways. Take pots, again, as an example. You will study:

- what they depict (what do we learn from the scene on that pot?)
- how they depict it (what do we learn from the style and material of that pot?)
- who made and commissioned them (what do we learn from the fact that this pot was produced by a particular workshop in Athens for a rich man in southern Italy?)
- where they are used (what do we learn from the fact that this pot was used at dinner parties and another in the kitchen?)

The more questions you can bring to them, the richer the visual arts will become for you – both as art objects in their own right and as a source for the Classical world more widely.

Literature

This doesn't have the kind of physical presence that material evidence does, but it has a different strength: it gives us, more literally, voices from the past. We can, as it were, hear the ancient Greeks and Romans speak, about what happened, about how they felt, about what they thought, and experience how they expressed themselves. This gives us a rather different access to their world, complementary to the one we get from material culture.

Like the word 'arts', literature can suggest aesthetic pleasure. Theatres, like galleries, aren't places where we study evidence but where we enjoy good writing and acting, and this course will give you plenty of opportunity to do just that. But we want to stress again that literature, at the same time, can serve as a source of information about the past. In Block 1 you will study Homer. The sorts of questions you might ask about him as a source aren't unlike those we just went through for pots. Homer depicts a particular society. You might ask what you can learn from this depiction of early Greek society. You might further ask why Homer chose to depict society by writing long poems (epics), and what sort of world it was in which these kinds of poem were apparently a dominant genre of literature. Furthermore, much Classical literature (especially in the earlier periods) was performed rather than read. So you might ask who performed the epics of Homer, who listened to them, where these performances took place, who (if anyone) paid for them, and how these contexts will have shaped Homer's poetry.

Again, we'd like to stress one particular risk. The very explicitness of literature – the fact that you can read it – can be deceptive. The nature of Homer's society is a hugely contested issue. Is it contemporary society Homer is describing? Is it an earlier kind of society that Homer (just like us) explores on the basis of knowledge that has somehow come down to him? If it is, does the fiction still tell us something about real societies? Moreover, what sort of voice is Homer's? Was he part of an élite? In that case, how is what he says biased by this fact? Or was he influenced by what his audience wanted to hear? Along with the vast majority of ancient voices we hear through literature, Homer's is a male voice; and even most of the far fewer

female voices we *do* hear are written down or even invented by men. The point may be extended to say that we only hear the voices of the literate, a small minority in the ancient past, and so literature can never be representative of the totality of society. As ever, unmediated access to the ancient world is impossible.

Historiography

This is the writing of history, another type of source that relies on words. Many of the things we said about literature apply to historiography as well, and we won't need to repeat them. The reason we think it's worth having a separate paragraph on historiography is that where literature is associated with art, history-writing is today associated with truth. As a result, it's a natural instinct to read ancient historians with the expectation that they are more reliable sources than literature. To a degree, that's fair enough. Most ancient historians took pains to distinguish themselves in one way or another from poets. However, the character of these distinctions varied greatly, and rarely matches the distinctions most of us today would make between history and literature. For instance, the association of historiography and truth, while known, is rather different in the ancient world. Tacitus (a Roman born in CE 56 and a sophisticated historian if ever there was one) starts his most famous work (the *Annals*) with a line of verse. Herodotus, the first Greek historian to survive in bulk, is at the centre of an enormous debate: some scholars think that he simply made up large chunks of his work, and no one thinks that everything he says can be taken as fact. He even says himself:

My business is to record what people say, but I am by no means bound to believe it – and that may be taken to apply to this book as a whole.

(Herodotus 7.152; trans. de Sélincourt)

So even in the fifth century BCE, history was as much about belief as about truth. You will read several ancient historians during this course. To explore the question of what they thought it meant to write history is immensely rewarding. The downside is that historiography is no more straightforward a source than any other. As you read ancient historians, always ask yourself what you think their aim is and how reliable you consider their evidence to be.

Philosophy

This is yet another essentially literary source, so we can be brief. In fact, as in the case of history, its distinction from literature is anything but cut and dried. The only reason we mention it here separately is because we want to make it explicit that almost everything we have said for literature holds for philosophy too. Many varieties of philosophy aim to find absolute truths. In this respect, philosophy is less concerned with particular periods and places than is, for instance, historiography. In Block 4, you will study what the Roman philosopher Seneca had to say about the 'right' life, some of which we can empathise with even now. He didn't try to say anything specifically historical about the Classical world. At the same time, though, Seneca had close ties with the emperor Nero. Moreover, he, like everyone else, was shaped by the times he lived in. Thus philosophy, like literature, can be used as a source for exploring the Classical world, yet it can also be studied as part of our contemporary world since we can still ask some of the same philosophical questions that were asked in the ancient world, and of course reason in similar ways.

Documents

Various texts survive from the ancient world that don't fit into any of the categories above. Most of them are categorised as 'documentary'. These can be parts of archives, or public commemorations such as tombstones, or inventories, or even shopping lists. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of such material is now lost (after all, even today, a shopping list and many company and government records have a lower hope of long-term survival than a novel). Nonetheless, some of them have survived, mostly in one of two ways.

They were either recorded in inscriptions on stone which didn't need as much care as paper to be preserved; or they were recorded on papyrus in a very dry place, usually Egypt, and came down to us even though they were thrown onto a (very dry) rubbish heap. Such documentary inscriptions and papyri add a further dimension to our exploration of the Classical world, as they show us aspects that literature, philosophy or art don't care so much about: the more profane and humdrum sort of things. Moreover, they may often be less biased in their evidence than what a historian or a philosopher has to say (how much room is there for bias on a shopping list?). Nonetheless, they too need careful evaluation. If you find a shopping list in the sands of Egypt, you can immediately draw conclusions about the sorts of things people bought in Egypt, but you will find yourself immediately wanting to know who these people were: rich or poor, natives or foreign, and so on. Not even documentary sources are completely straightforward.

A further, more general, issue relating to written sources follows on from these considerations about survival. Greek or Latin texts have been translated into many other languages, and all the texts you study here will be translated into English. But as critical scholars we should ask about the nature of the Greek or Latin text that was translated into English (or indeed texts in any of the other languages used in the ancient world). In the case of an inscription, the text may well have survived on stone in an easily legible form, perhaps stored in a museum or still in its original position (*in situ*) on an archaeological site. In this ideal case, the establishment of the text should be relatively straightforward, and all that is required is an accurate copying of the texts and its publication in a collection of inscriptions. For example, it might contain some abbreviations of names or titles; we imagine that a scholar publishing their original reading of an inscription might be able to come up with a suitable 'expansion' of the abbreviation, and so produce an authoritative text readable in the original language and translated as required.

Unfortunately, reality is rarely that simple. Often an inscription may be incomplete because the stone upon which it was inscribed is broken and part of the original text is missing. In such cases it may be possible to reconstruct the missing letters or words by comparison with other surviving inscriptions or lexicons of words used on inscriptions, but obviously the more that is missing, the less certain the reconstruction will be. Resolving such problems forms the basis of many academic debates, and ideally a consensus can be reached; reconstructed passages of ancient texts are almost always indicated as such, usually with the reconstructed sections contained in square parentheses.

Problems of this type occur on stone, but even more so on fragile materials. Ancient documents written on papyrus and other fragile materials do survive in their original form, but they are often fragmentary and the

handwriting and language can be extremely challenging to read. Ancient texts such as Homer or Herodotus do occasionally survive as papyri, but more often they have survived as manuscripts through a process of repeated copying in antiquity, during the Middle Ages and later (see the plate facing p.550 in the *OCCC*). The copying ensured their survival, but also created the possibility of errors during copying being incorporated, as well as providing an opportunity for copyists to 'correct' or clarify passages they either could not read or could not understand. As a result, many ancient texts have survived in several different versions and one task of Classical scholarship is to collate various manuscripts in order to produce a reliable text that can be published and form the foundation for further study (either in the original language or in translation). Such publications of texts are often called 'editions', and in matters of hair-splitting detail it might be necessary to state which edition of an ancient text is being referred to. (You will learn about the survival of ancient literature on DVD when you study Block 2.)

Finally, there is the issue of translation itself. In this course, you will read all sources in translation. You will think in some detail about the implications of this in Block 1. At this stage, we just want to make three general points:

- 1 Don't forget that what you're reading are translations. In particular, the more you try to come to terms with details of phrasing, the more you need to ask to what degree the phrasing is an aspect of the translation rather than the original Greek or Latin text.
- 2 However, we suggest that you see this as an opportunity as much as a drawback. The most obvious thing to do – as you will discover several times in this course – is to compare different translations. This allows you to counteract the risk of being misled by a translator. More than that, though, it will almost certainly show you things about the text that you might have missed had you simply read it in the original. Comparing translations will allow you to see how the tone, mood and vocabulary of a text have been interpreted by different scholars – something to which we don't normally have access when we read a text in its original language.
- 3 Lastly, this course will introduce you to a number of key terms in Greek and Latin. Every language and culture has terms that we find particularly difficult to translate into other languages and cultures. Often these terms have a lot to say about the culture in question. By the end of the course, you will be familiar with several such terms from the Classical world.

We hope this overview of the different kinds of sources you may encounter will form a good basis for your work. As you go through the course, you will be able to build on it, and develop more detailed knowledge, but it may be useful to revisit this section from time to time, if you're in doubt about how best to treat a source. Some of your TMAs will involve the close scrutiny of sources, and it is often useful to bear in mind some of the basic facts about sources while you are developing sophisticated discussions which depend upon them.

To round off this section, and before moving on to modern scholarship, we'll highlight a couple of general points applying to all the different ancient sources in different ways:

- All sources have contexts. These contexts can be physical, social, historical, stylistic, literary, political, performative and many other things. The contexts will shape both the way the source was produced – written, built, drawn, buried and so on – and the way it was perceived. Moreover, all sources still have contexts today. The Colosseum (now a half-ruin) is in the middle of a modern city; Sophocles' *Antigone* is performed in modern theatres; while arrowheads unearthed on a battle site are locked up in a store room. The modern contexts will inevitably influence your perceptions, just as the ancient contexts will have shaped ancient perceptions. One of the most crucial things in working with ancient sources is to get into the habit of asking yourself routinely what the ancient and modern contexts of a source are, and to start your interpretation of the source from there. And it is equally crucial to look for more than just one context. Take a scene in *Antigone*. One ancient context is the Athenian outdoor theatre in which the play was performed; another is Athenian concepts of justice; and yet another is simply the context within the play itself, and so on. There will almost always be more than one context to take into account. Judging which contexts are more or less important can be one of the major challenges of studying ancient material.
- Different kinds of sources are available for different issues, regions and periods. Sometimes the most difficult thing about sources isn't interpreting the sources that you have, but the sources that you don't have. This sounds paradoxical, but is quite simple and fairly important. It is inevitable that we concentrate on areas where we have rich sources. So, for instance, we will talk more about Athens than any other Greek city, and more about Rome than any other Roman city. The risk is that for you, Classical Greece becomes just Athens. Similarly, there are more men than women in this course, because the sources are so much richer about men than about women. Or we may concentrate too much on the social and political élite because their words and deeds survive in the sources. Whatever you study, try to remind yourself that the evidence we have today will hardly ever be balanced. Rather it is that which happens to have survived 1,500–3,000 years later.

Modern sources

As set out in Figure 1, modern sources, too, fall into various subcategories. We'll look at some of them in more detail a little later. For now let's just say that most of the sources you will use on this course are broadly *scholarly*: publications written by people with an expertise in the Classical world. We will come back later to other sources, in particular the internet, which raise questions in their own right.

Scholarly publications try to do exactly what you will do in this course: explore the Classical world. And like you, they do so by using ancient sources as well as earlier modern scholarship. We stressed at some length that you need to ask questions about the reliability of ancient sources when using them. So what about modern scholarship and its reliability? This is quite a different question, with different issues. First, you can probably assume that the modern scholars share the bulk of your assumptions about truth, facts, and the aims of academic work, in a way you can't in the case of authors such as Tacitus, Herodotus or any other ancient source. In this sense you can (and generally will have to) rely on them.

On the other hand, modern sources, scholarly or otherwise, aren't really evidence in the same way, and this is very important indeed. Some people would even refuse to call them 'sources', with some justification. You can say: 'I think it is likely that the population of Attica decreased in the course of the Archaic period. Our evidence for that is a decrease in the number of graves during this period.' As mentioned earlier, you will then have to discuss rival interpretations of the same evidence, but as such this is a perfectly valid way of arguing. But you can't say: 'I think it is likely that the population of Attica decreased in the course of the archaic period. My evidence for that is the A219 Course Introduction', or 'My evidence for that is the book that scholar X, Y, or Z wrote.' Those scholars have *interpreted* evidence; their books *aren't* evidence. This is a crucial point to remember when you write your TMAs.

So if secondary literature isn't evidence, what is it? Or rather, why use it? One way of answering this question is to say that it presents a kind of short cut. If you have one year to explore the ancient world, you could spend it exclusively on looking at the ancient evidence. The likelihood is, though, that without the guidance of secondary sources your progress would be very slow. Secondary literature gives you access to the long tradition of scholarship on the Classical world. That's why you will find it immensely useful. But as you read it, you will always need to ask yourself what the ancient evidence is that justifies any scholarly statements, and in fact whether you agree with those statements.

Another issue to be aware of is that the writing of the history of the ancient world has its own history. Each generation of historians is influenced by its predecessors, either improving upon or refuting previous histories. In this way, modern secondary sources also have their own histories. A famous and influential modern secondary source, for example, is Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, readily available on bookshelves in recent editions. It might appear to be an attractive short cut to the ancient world – it makes good use of the ancient evidence and some passages are a good literary read – but it first appeared in CE 1776. Therefore, it is not a very 'modern' modern secondary source. It is a product of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, written at the time of the American struggle for independence; its context is a world very different from today. As such, it has a different status and value to a modern textbook written over 200 years later. The facts it contains are not necessarily now invalid, and some of its themes – the suppression of liberty and the triumph of barbarism – may still have a resonance, but it does not consider many of the contemporary concerns of historians and has not benefited from the advances made in the centuries since it was written. In short, it is out of date, and in many ways is a better source for the Enlightenment than for the ancient world. Of course, it is easy enough to come to a judgement like this about something so old, but where and how can a line be drawn? How can we know that a secondary source is a reliable account of the ancient world?

Ideally, the most recent book on a subject should have discussed and taken into account *all* previous scholarship on the subject, and so make all of its predecessors redundant. Ideally, again, a reliable recent secondary source should be balanced, discussing other competing secondary scholarship and weighing up its strengths and weaknesses. It should also be free of polemic or distorting theoretical frameworks; or if not entirely free of them, it should at least acknowledge their presence and influence. Primary

sources should be critically discussed, and assertions supported by argument and reference to other evidence and scholarship.

The function of secondary literature as a short cut – summarising and criticising earlier generations – explains some of the scholarly conventions of this kind of source:

- 1 *References to primary sources.* Since it is the ancient evidence that counts, secondary literature will normally clearly identify the primary evidence behind a claim. Sometimes such references are put into the text itself; sometimes they are in brackets; sometimes they are in footnotes; and this helps to build up the authority of a secondary source. You, in turn, should learn to adopt a similar discipline. As you write your TMAs, always support your arguments with references to the primary sources. The Assignment Book will tell you what format to use for such references.
- 2 *References to secondary literature.* As we have just said, secondary literature gives you access not just to the learning of one particular scholar but to the tradition of Classical scholarship more generally; that is, other books or articles containing the results of the studies of other modern scholars. Whoever is the author of one particular modern source will themselves have used earlier discussions of related issues. Partly because unacknowledged appropriation of other people's ideas is a type of theft called plagiarism, and partly because it is helpful for the reader to know where else to look, secondary literature will normally be careful to point out not just what primary evidence supports a claim, but also which modern sources have informed the writing. There are different ways of doing that, but the most common is to use brackets or footnotes on the relevant page, and then a bibliography at the back, gathering the various items referred to. This is another element of modern scholarship that when carefully done helps to establish its authority. Again, you will be encouraged to do the same in your TMAs.

A further factor that should be considered is who wrote the book. One would expect that a widely known expert on a subject should be qualified to produce a reliable secondary source, but that is no sure guide. Scholars are not generally household names, and those that appear in the media may spend more time with television producers than with ancient sources! And even if an author has impeccable credentials, that is no guarantee of a reliable book, especially if it is simply presented as opinion rather than argument supported by evidence. However, since a subject such as Classical Studies is based upon interpretation, critical argument and debate, rather than independently verifiable facts, a single book will never be the last word on a subject, and the most important thing is to adopt a critically questioning approach to each and every kind of source you encounter. Once again: modern sources aren't sources in the same way as ancient sources. They are not evidence.

Your set books as sources

Finally, let's come back to the different types of modern sources as indicated in Figure 1. Many of these types are familiar to you in one way or another, so we can be brief. You have probably already bought (or will soon buy) the set books listed earlier. Three of them are clearly modern scholarship: *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization (OCCC)*, *A Brief History of Ancient Greece*

(*BHAG*) and *Rome in the Late Republic* (Beard and Crawford). The other two, *The Odyssey* and *Pliny's Letters*, are both translations of ancient sources.

The *OCCC* is an encyclopedia; it has succinct entries providing information about aspects of the ancient world, and while it rarely goes into a detailed discussion of sources, it does identify the sources and attempt to give you a reliable starting point. *BHAG* and Beard and Crawford are textbooks. They present a larger-scale overview of our understanding of the topics in question (Greece and late republican Rome respectively). You will shortly do a couple of exercises to familiarise yourself with the particular issues involved in using these sources.

The most detailed form of modern source is the scholarly article, often in an academic journal, or book-length monographs. In Block 3 you will be asked to read a scholarly article on Romans and their ancestors. The difference between such specialist work and textbooks is on a sliding scale, rather than hard and fast. Perhaps the most important difference is the degree to which the work in question advances scholarship and constitutes a contribution to the sum of knowledge about the Classical world. There is little, if anything, in *BHAG* that is new scholarship; the aim of *BHAG* is to summarise existing thought and present an easily accessible account. Beard and Crawford, by contrast, are at least one step closer to scholarly monographs; part of what they do is put forward new suggestions in a way that you won't find in *BHAG*.

Yet another, particularly problematic, modern source is the internet. On this course you will use some internet applications that we have designed for you (we will come back to this in Section 3). But in Block 2 you will also be asked to use the internet to find information that isn't provided by us. It is worth, therefore, pointing out at the very beginning the most distinctive feature of the internet as a source: anyone can publish more or less anything they like very easily. This has the great advantage of making an enormous amount of material accessible to you in a way it wasn't to previous generations. But it has the great disadvantage that there is often no quality assurance (or at least this is the case at the time of writing this course, in 2005). If you buy a book – and certainly if you're encouraged to buy a book as part of a course – you can at least hope that the publisher will have done some work to ensure a certain degree of accuracy; you can assess the credentials of the author and look for a bibliography and footnotes or endnotes. This isn't so easy to check when you use the internet. Often it is impossible to identify the author, and supporting sources may not be apparent. So you should be even more critically thoughtful about the accuracy of information if it is taken from the internet. If you have the time, you may wish to take a look at Safari, a guide to the information world (including the internet) provided by the Open University Library. You will find a link to Safari in the 'Library resources' section of the eDesktop.

This brings us to the end of our overview of modern sources, and we can now go on to become familiar with the *OCCC* and *BHAG*.

Exercise



Have a look now in your copy of the *OCCC*, and find the entry for 'tourism' (p.729). As you read it, note down the sources, ancient and modern, that are referred to, and try to organise them using our classifications above. (Remember: we divided ancient sources into archaeology, visual arts, literature, historiography, and documents.)

You will find that many sources are abbreviated. This is normal practice in academic publications. Usefully, the *OCCC* has a complete list of abbreviations on pp.xvii–xxiv (which you may well find helpful when consulting other books, too). Look up abbreviations that you don't understand. There will then probably still be sources left which you don't know how to classify, since you have not read them (in fact, some of them are really quite obscure). If you are pressed for time, simply add a category headed 'don't know' to your list of classifications. If you have more time, you could look up the cross-referenced entries to elsewhere in the *OCCC* and check what sort of sources they are. In any case, we'd like you to look up at least one of the sources you don't know, to help you familiarise yourself with the *OCCC* and the quality of the information and discussion it contains.

Discussion

Our list is as follows:

- Ancient sources

Art history/archaeology: the colossi of Memnon and other pharaonic monuments.

Literature: Isocrates, *Trapeziticus* 17.4; Heraclides Criticus, *On the Cities in Greece*; Pausanias.

Historiography: Herodotus 1.30; Pausanias.

Documents: Tebtunis Papyri 1.33; Greek and Roman graffiti.

- Modern sources

Pfister, F. (1951): an edition.

Austin 83: a translation.

Bagnall and Derow 58: an edition of a manuscript.

As we said, there is no reason why you should have been able to categorise all these sources, but we hope that you will have succeeded with a few of them! Now we'd like to add a few comments, with the aim of giving you an idea of what sort of book the *OCCC* is and how you will be able to use it.

- 1 The references are frequent, detailed and precise. The *OCCC* is very compressed, packing a lot of material into a short space. This means that you will often find it impossible to understand all the detail at first. In most cases, when working with the *OCCC*, it will not be necessary for you to master all the detail, but this shouldn't deter you. For example, we'd never heard of Isocrates' work *Trapeziticus* before reading the 'tourism' entry, and we'd be surprised if many of the course team had! However, using the *OCCC*, you can find out more and more detail the more you dig. If you looked up some of the sources you didn't know, you have already started this process.
- 2 Most of the sources are ancient. This is partly to do with the history of the *OCCC*. As you can see on the back, it's based on *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. One of the key differences is that *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* gives bibliographies of modern sources at the end of each entry, while the *OCCC* doesn't. This observation provides a useful reminder of the privileged status of primary evidence. To support the description of ancient tourism, the author felt it necessary to cite numerous primary and no secondary sources, only editions and translations of primary sources.

- 3 We noticed that there are more word-based sources than those based on material culture. The only reference to material culture we found is in general terms to the ‘colossi of Memnon and other pharaonic monuments’, illustrated facing p.742. To explain this imbalance, we would need to go into more detail about the subject. It might be that more sources about tourism survive from literature, historiography and philosophy than from art and archaeology. Alternatively, the author may have a preference for written sources; after all, it is the written graffiti and literary associations that get mentioned in the caption more than the statues themselves. It may be the case that the dictionary style, with short articles and little space for illustrations, makes it harder to integrate material culture. Another possible explanation is that less research has been undertaken on the material evidence for ancient tourism. Whichever of these factors come into play, we hope you, too, saw this imbalance.
- 4 Finally, some sources are referred to very specifically (‘Hdt 1.30’), while others are quite vague (‘colossi of Memnon and other pharaonic monuments’; ‘Pausanias’). Why is that? The precise references are about very specific facts, so for example the paragraph ‘Hdt 1.30’ starts:

For this reason, then – and also no doubt for the pleasure of foreign travel – Solon left home and, after a visit to the court of Amasis in Egypt, went to Sardis to see Croesus.

Croesus entertained him hospitably in the palace, and three or four days after his arrival instructed some servants to take him on a tour of the royal treasuries and point out the richness and magnificence of everything.

(Herodotus 1.30; trans. de Sélincourt)

The translation indicates that the ancient text precisely reports the fact provided in the *OCCC* entry. Meanwhile, the more general references are about recurring facts: there are many Greek and Latin graffiti. The work of Pausanias almost entirely consists of descriptions of parts of Greece he visited and was informed about. This is a common practice, which you may want to start adopting in your TMAs. Wherever possible, give a precise reference, but you don’t necessarily need to give such precise references when you refer to a widespread and well-known phenomenon.

So much, then, for the *OCCC*. Textbooks like *BHAG* are rather different kinds of sources and require different skills in using them. The next exercise is aimed at introducing these skills, at the same time as giving you some initial practice in working with ancient sources.

Exercise



Your study of Block 2 will start with a section on Aeschylus’ play *Persians*, which is set in the context of the Persian invasion of Greece at the beginning of the fifth century BCE. By way of a sneak preview, we will focus in this exercise on one aspect of one battle in the course of this invasion. For our purposes here (as opposed to later, in Block 2), the merest outline of the context is enough. Xerxes, the Persian king,

invaded Greece with a massive army, on both sea and land. The Greeks let him take some regions without putting up much resistance, but then confronted him at a narrow pass between the mountains and the sea, called Thermopylae. In the event they lost the battle, but only after intense fighting. Most of them, including their leader, the Spartan Leonidas, died. *BHAG* has an account of this battle on pp.134–5. Read this account now.

We want to focus only on the very last section in this short paragraph, starting with the decapitation of Leonidas ('On Xerxes' orders ...' up to and including the two-line epitaph). Modern scholarship, we said earlier on, are based on ancient sources, and that's why they are often called 'secondary'. The most important ancient, or 'primary', source here is the historian Herodotus, whom we have already mentioned a few times. His account of the Battle of Thermopylae is lengthy, which is why we concentrate on the aftermath of the battle. Two sections of his narrative are relevant to our passage: Book 7, Chapters 228 and 238, or 7.228 and 7.238 for short.

Next read these two sections of Herodotus. They are printed in Readings Book 1, as Readings 1 and 2. There will be some detail (in particular names) that you don't know. This happens quite frequently when you read ancient texts, and isn't just because you may not have studied the Classical world before. We, too, regularly read ancient texts of which we find certain details hard to understand. The important thing is to try to use, understand and evaluate the texts nonetheless, to the degree that you are able.



Once you have read the two Herodotus passages, compare them to the passage at the end of the paragraph in *BHAG*, and reflect on the following questions:

- 1 What do you learn about the way you can use ancient sources like Herodotus?
- 2 What do you learn about the way you can use modern scholarship like *BHAG*?

Discussion

No doubt your thoughts aren't quite the same as ours. This is unavoidable in exercises that demand a good deal of personal judgement (and, as we said before, that's the case for the majority of exercises in this course). But we hope that there are enough points of contact between your way of approaching the question and ours to make our discussion useful to you. We will take the questions one by one.

- 1 One obvious (perhaps all too obvious) point to make is that the two Herodotus passages treating the events in question are separate. In writing their paragraph, the authors of *BHAG* had to collect these two different passages and put them together. This is one of the most fundamental aspects of using ancient sources: you will need to collect different sources and put them together. In this case, the two different sources come from the same overall source (Herodotus). In other cases, they will come from different places altogether.

Collecting, however, is only one aspect of what the *BHAG* authors did here. They also *selected*. Both passages had a lot of detail that didn't make it into *BHAG*: three little poems of which *BHAG* only prints the second one, for instance, and Herodotus' views on how Persians usually treat their enemies after battle, which weren't selected for inclusion in the textbook. The *BHAG* authors will have studied both passages, decided which detail is particularly important or relevant for their overall account of the battle at Thermopylae, and made their selection accordingly. This close study followed by selection is a standard practice in using ancient sources that you will follow throughout the course.

Related to this selection process is the issue of evaluation. Evaluation isn't explicit in the *BHAG* passage but can still be felt rather faintly. For instance, the *BHAG* authors must have decided that some basic details in Herodotus were correct, such as the epitaph they quote and Xerxes' orders to decapitate Leonidas. Perhaps (but this is pure speculation) they decided that other aspects were less reliable and that's why they left them out (such as Herodotus' thoughts about the exceptionality of the treatment administered to Leonidas). And their rather cagey phrase 'attributed to Simonides' suggests that they don't have complete trust in the reliability of whatever source stated that the poet Simonides is the author of that epitaph. (That source is probably not Herodotus: he is rather vague about this issue, it seems. What do you think?) Evaluation, too, is an essential aspect of work with ancient sources. Wherever you use ancient sources, you have to ask yourself how reliable you think they are. The answer is of course different from case to case.

- 2 What does all this mean for the way you can use *BHAG*? Well, perhaps the most important thing is that you should have worked out by now that even a textbook like *BHAG* doesn't simply tell you 'the facts' but makes its own choices about what to collect, select, suppress, trust, distrust and so on. The choices may be good (as they usually are – otherwise we wouldn't have asked you to buy the book) or they may be less good (as they sometimes are – no book is perfect), but they are always choices. Going back to the ancient sources will always tell you further things, and is therefore crucial whenever you want to get to the bottom of something.

Next, you have become familiar with some of the habits of *BHAG*. In particular, the authors are rather silent about how they collect, select and evaluate. The reason you now know which Herodotus passages are at the bottom of their account is that we worked it out for you (you could have done it yourself, but either way the point is that *BHAG* doesn't tell you). Other books are different, and you will be asked in your TMAs to be much more explicit than *BHAG*. As we said above, you will be required to provide references to the ancient (as well as modern) sources that you use. This will make your TMAs in some ways more scholarly texts than *BHAG*. Another aspect in which *BHAG* is silent is the rationale for its choices. Why the second of the three epigrams? Perhaps because it is the most famous one? (There are many later imitations, both in antiquity and in modern literature.) Or because they think it captures something about the Battle of Thermopylae that the others don't? Or do they like the uplifting tone of it and want us to

go away with a rather heroic version of the Greeks at Thermopylae? And why do they leave out Herodotus' comment that the Persians usually treat their enemies with more respect? Don't they believe it? Or do they want to have only information specific to Thermopylae here? Or do they want to create a crueller image of Xerxes? Again, we don't know. Modern scholars, just like ancient sources, have a bias, and it is important to think about bias when dealing with both kinds of source.

As we have pointed to some issues to be aware of when reading *BHAG*, we should probably stress that none of this is intended to warn you against using *BHAG*. On the contrary, the last two exercises were designed to get you into the habit of using both the *OCCC* and *BHAG* as much as possible, but to use them critically. You will be asked throughout the course to use the *OCCC*, and throughout the Greek part to use *BHAG* (the textbook for the Roman part of the course will be introduced later on). However, you should also get into the habit of using these books to find out whatever information you are after at a particular point. In their different ways, they are a mine of information – the *OCCC* for condensed accounts of numerous aspects of the Classical world, and *BHAG* for a more expansive narrative of Greek history. As should have become clear, they can't be treated as the last word, but they can be a good summary and a pointer to where to find out more.

Reading around the course

You aren't required to read beyond the blocks or the material you are referred to specifically as you work through the blocks. This means that you won't need to have access to any resources other than the course materials sent to you in the mailings, the set books, and occasionally the internet.

Working your way through the blocks and associated materials is the priority. However, if you have the time and interest to go further, there are various ways of doing so.

Ancient sources

The course provides you with only a selection of ancient sources. Spending time with further sources is probably the best way of going further. Follow your interests. If you are taken by Homer in Block 1, read more of *The Odyssey* or *The Iliad*. If it is the Acropolis in Block 2 that you find particularly stimulating, look at further Greek temples, and so on. As we will stress throughout the course, ancient sources will always be at the heart of any exploration of the ancient world, and all blocks will make suggestions for further ancient sources you might like to look at. But don't feel confined to those mentioned there. Many ancient sources are easily available (e.g. Penguin translations). You'll be hard pressed to find an ancient source that isn't relevant to exploring the ancient world.

Modern sources

There are various ways in which you can go about finding further modern scholarship on issues you are interested in. First, there are your set books. As you work through the course, you will be asked to look at particular sections of the *OCCC*, *BHAG* and Beard and Crawford – those sections that are most immediately relevant to the questions at hand. This leaves certain parts of those books untouched. Feel free to explore further.

Next, there are the specific suggestions in the blocks. At the end of each block, sometimes at the end of each part, we include a list of a few items that you might want to look at if you are interested in taking the subject of this block further.

Finally, you may be interested in topics that aren't covered by the set books, and don't relate specifically to a block. For this purpose, here are a few more general suggestions:

- Hornblower, S. and Spawforth, A. (eds) (2003, 3rd edn) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. As explained above, this is the parent of the *OCCC*. It has extra entries, and bibliographies on each entry.
- Taplin, O. (ed.) (2000) *Literature in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A New Perspective*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Good, readable accounts of many periods in Classical literature, studying literature in the context of the society at large. Has been re-issued in paperback in 2001 in two separate volumes (Greek and Roman).
- *Cambridge Companions*. This Cambridge University Press series aims to provide innovative but accessible accounts of various key writers and topics. Issues so far include *Homer* (2004), *Early Greek Philosophy* (1999), *Greek Tragedy* (1997), *The Stoics* (2003), *Virgil* (1997), *Ovid* (2002) and *The Roman Republic* (2004). Blackwell has recently started a comparable series (e.g. R. Rutherford *Classical Literature: a Concise History* (2005)).
- *New Surveys in the Classics* is a series of short single-authored introductions to numerous Classical topics, published by Oxford University Press for the Classical Association. The series has been going for a while, and has a wide range now. Note for instance J.N. Bremmer on *Greek Religion* (1994), B.A. Sparkes on *Greek Art* (1991), P. Stewart on *Roman Art* (2004) and L. Hardwick on *Reception Studies* (2003).
- *The Cambridge Ancient History* (1982–, 2nd edn), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. By various authors, this is a multi-volume detailed narrative history of the ancient world. It is probably more useful for looking into specific issues than for reading about longer timeframes.
- For accounts of whole periods, a set of individual volumes published by Routledge is probably a better starting point: R. Osborne, *Greece in the Making, 1200–479 BC* (1996); S. Hornblower, *The Greek World, 479–323 BC* (2002, 2nd edn); T.J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome* (1995). Continuing into the imperial period is M. le Glay, L. Voisin and Y. le Bohec (2005) *A History of Rome*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Buxton, R.G.A. (2004) *The Complete World of Greek Mythology*, London: Thames & Hudson. A well illustrated and carefully thought-out discussion of Greek mythology.
- Osborne, R. (1998) *Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. An up-to-date approach to Greek art history down to the first part of the fourth century BCE.
- Talbert, R.J.A. (ed.) (1985) *Atlas of Classical History*, London: Croom Helm. One of several good sets of maps of the ancient world.
- Cherry, D. (2001) *The Roman World: A Sourcebook*, Oxford: Blackwell. Provides a thematically arranged selection of Roman ancient sources in translation.
- Burn, L. (1991) *Greek and Roman Art*, London: British Museum Press. Accessible but concentrates on the Greeks more than the Romans. Also try A. Claridge (1998) *Rome*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. This provides a detailed guide to the archaeological remains in Rome.

All of these in turn provide further reading suggestions and more references are provided at the end of the *OCCC*. For electronic resources, see the links on the eDesktop, especially MyOpenLibrary.

3 Beginning to explore

With your initial work on sources and on what it may mean to 'explore the Classical world' under your belt, you're now in a good position to start exploring. To lay the foundations for your explorations, you will in this section do some work on ancient times and places. Not least since you will cover a wide range of materials from different periods and locations, it will be important for you to know how they all fit together.

This is the moment to introduce the three electronic resources developed specifically for this course:

- a pronunciation guide
- a set of timelines
- a set of maps

Most of this section will be devoted to the timelines and maps, as means for exploring times and places. Before that, though, let's have a quick look at the pronunciation guide. As you will have noticed already, in exploring the Classical world you will come across many unfamiliar names. As a result, you may at times wonder about how to pronounce them correctly. The thing to keep in mind here is that the correct pronunciation doesn't matter all that greatly. You will certainly not be examined on this, and for a reason: the way we pronounce ancient names in the modern world has little to do with the way the names were pronounced in antiquity. In fact, ancient names are pronounced rather differently in different modern languages – there are even differences between British English and American English in this respect, and for many names there are also alternative pronunciations within British English. All that said, you will want to feel comfortable and confident speaking about the Classical world. This is where the pronunciation guide comes in, and of course your tutor will help you resolve any queries that you may have.

Exercise

Go to the eDesktop and select 'ICT'. Next, select 'Pronunciation Guide'. You will now be able to search for a name. As an example, try to find 'Thucydides', the historian you will study in Block 2. (Refer to the online help facility if you have any worries about how to use the resources here.)



You may also have noticed that there is a column for alternative spellings. As we set out above (Section 1.7), many ancient words and names can be transliterated into English in more than one way.

You may want to experiment a little further with the pronunciation guide now, and try out a couple of other names. But the pronunciation guide isn't a compulsory element of the course. It is there for you to use as and when you wish – its intention is simply to provide you with the confidence to know that you are pronouncing the word correctly when you use it in conversations or in a tutorial.

3.1 Ancient time

Now that you have finished with the pronunciation guide, we can move on to a topic that is more central to the course: ancient time. To help you keep an overview of ancient chronology, we have developed online timelines. Like all timelines, they give you sets of important events and dates in the periods you study, but in addition this one allows you to add your own dates as you work on the various periods. By the end of the course, you should have your own customised timelines; and obviously editing the timeline is also a good way of collecting and selecting as well as aiding your memory.

Exercise



Go to the eDesktop again, select 'ICT', and then 'Timeline'. The first thing you need to do is choose which timeline you want to look at. Highlight for now the 'General' timeline, and select 'Submit' – the timeline will appear on the right. You can scroll up and down. (You will notice an online tutorial is provided to help you use the timelines, if you have any problems with finding your way around.)

Read quickly through the 'General' timeline. As you read through it, don't try to remember every entry, but for now think instead about the sort of entries. What sort of entries have been entered on the timeline?

Discussion

There are obviously different ways of classifying the entries. Perhaps the most obvious distinction is short events of less than a year, and longer events happening over a span of time. Another way of classifying would be to say that there are broadly political entries (wars, successions of rulers, and so on) and broadly cultural entries (civilisations, artistic achievements, and so on). Or we could say that some entries are about individual people (lives, deaths) while others are about more anonymous events (wars and so on).

Obviously, choices have been made about the sorts of things to include in drawing up the timeline (in this case by the A219 course team). These choices have been driven by a view of what matters more and what less, but also by what can easily be put on a timeline and what can't. What sort of clothes or music were fashionable in Sparta in a particular year? When in the Roman empire were suicide rates highest? These points aren't entered on the timeline, partly because it is too difficult to apply a date to them or the necessary information is simply not available from the ancient world. Perhaps they aren't very important. But even if they are, we simply don't have the precise sort of information that would allow us to give an answer.

Effectively, we are trying to make two points, both of which will come up throughout this course:

- 1 There is more than one way of exploring ancient Greece and Rome. Different people ask different questions, and – back to the timeline – are interested in different dates. The more you take care to ask your own questions and explore what interests you the most, the more you will get out of this course. The dates on the timeline are significant, and we hope by reading through them you have already begun to

learn about the Classical world, but they aren't the only important dates and they are not a definitive list of what happened in history. They are the result of a process of collection and selection. You can use the timeline to add your own selections and develop a personalised timeline.

- 2 Timelines need to be treated with care in another way too. They tend to privilege events for which we know a date. Since there are many things that are somehow important, for which we don't know the date, there is a risk that they get forgotten. One remedy is to introduce approximate dates, 'circa' (c.) or 'from ... until ...', but that only goes so far. For everything you read on a timeline, and for everything you learn, it's worth asking yourself what else you're *not* reading and *not* learning because they have not been selected.

If at all possible, you should make an effort to do this internet exercise. However, we have provided a printed version of the 'General' timeline at the end of this introduction (see Appendix 2) and printed versions of the block timelines at the end of each block. If you are unable to access the internet regularly you may want to use those printed timelines, but you obviously won't be able to amend them in the same way as you can amend the eDesktop version. If you have problems with the timeline, your tutor or perhaps a student self-help group should be able to help you.

Exercise

As the next step in your work on ancient chronology, read Essay One in *Experiencing the Classical World*: 'People, worlds and time' by Phil Perkins. As you read it, ask yourself how it is relevant to the timelines. Does it change the way you think about them in any way?



Discussion

Like all exploring, this is to some degree personal. So here are *our* three points. You are likely to have different ones.

- 1 To start with the most prosaic, there is the issue of BCE/CE. As discussed earlier, this course adopts the format BCE and CE as opposed to BC/AD, and you will have noticed this already on the timeline. The essay both explains some of the reasons (to remove the specifically Christian connotations of BC/AD), and also points out that, in a way, little is resolved, since the year everything is pegged to remains determined by traditions about the birth of Christ. The Greeks and Romans, as the essay points out, wouldn't have used anything like it, and that suggests – inevitably – that the timelines are written from our perspective, and not that of the Greeks and Romans. That's perfectly right and proper, of course, but again raises questions about what is included and what is not. There is no way of telling what the Romans or Greeks would have put in their own timeline (in fact, they would no doubt have had many different views), but one thing is sure: it would have been different from what is on your timelines now. This doesn't make the timelines invalid, but it means that you have to be aware that they will only get you so close in finding out what the Classical world was like.

- 2 Next, the discussion in Essay One of the beginning and end of the Classical world is relevant. It explains why 814 BCE is often taken as a conventional start date, and why CE 476 (and indeed later dates) serve as the end point. The timelines, though, start earlier, don't include 814 BCE and don't end exactly in CE 476. This underlines the pertinence of the points in the essay about the difficulty of collecting and selecting a precise start and end date.
- 3 Our third observation concerns periodisation, the main topic of the essay. The essay discusses at some points the rationale, challenges and dangers of periodisation. However, we find the timelines don't really reflect it. Events are listed chronologically, but it doesn't group them in periods. This is a dimension that seems to be missing from them.

Exercise



So let's close this gap. As Essay One explains, periodisation is an important tool for getting a handle on the Classical world, and for seeing connections. Table 1.1 of the essay shows a table of periods that are often used to segment ancient chronology. Go through the part of the table labelled 'Greece' and try to identify markers for the end and beginning of periods in the timeline. Which entry (if any) marks the end of the Archaic period and the beginning of the Classical period? Which entry (if any) marks the end of the Classical period and the beginning of the Hellenistic period? And so on.



At the same time, this may be a good opportunity for you to start to customise your timeline. In the menu on the left you can see a button: 'Add more dates to an existing timeline'. If you select it, a new menu comes up on the right in which you can choose the timeline you'd like to personalise ('Add Dates to a Line'). Select again the general one, and then create your entry. We suggest you use the option to mark the boundaries between periods into your timeline. If you find this cumbersome, don't get bogged down in it, but we think it may be helpful for you when you come back to the timelines. And, in any case, it's a good idea to get into the habit of customising the timelines straight away.

Discussion

To start with, the earliest period (the Iron Age/'Dark Age') appears to end at 800 BCE but this date does not appear on the timeline. There is an entry for c.1100–776 BCE for the 'Dark Age', and then 776 BCE is listed as the date of the first Olympic Games, but presumably a slightly earlier date was selected for this imprecise boundary when the table was drawn up. The Orientalising period – within the Archaic period – does not directly appear in the timeline; there is only a mention of the Assyrian empire and a Phoenician source that may be related to anything Oriental. This is because the timeline focuses upon dates and events, while the Orientalising period is most readily characterised by its art. The end of the Archaic period coincides with the entry for 480–49 BCE, the second Persian invasion that is discussed in the essay; yet remarkably, the sack of Athens is not listed in the timeline (you could add it if you wish). A similar omission occurs with

the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE. Between these dates, the timeline mentions events and personalities, but it cannot on its own flesh out the character of the Classical period. This would take a more detailed investigation of some of these dates, which is precisely what you will be doing in Block 2. From this exercise of mapping periods against the timeline, you can see that the timeline is merely a selection of events and provides an impression of clarity that serves as a framework and starting point for further exploration.

To finish off your initial work on chronology, we'd like you to focus on the first of these boundaries between periods: between the Archaic and the Classical period. Essay One has fixed it at the year 479 BCE.

Exercise

Have another look at the events on the timeline surrounding the year 479 BCE (both those put there by the course team, and any that you may have added). In addition, have a look at the last three paragraphs of the section on the Archaic age in the *OCCC* entry on 'Greece (prehistory and history)': 'Solon's reforms ...' (p.312) to '... with the theme' (p.313). On this basis, consider ways in which 479 BCE is a meaningful period boundary, and what ways it might be misleading to call this year a period boundary.



Discussion

As you will have noticed, the events in question come under the heading of the 'Persian Wars'. You will study these wars in more detail later in the course (Block 2). So we don't want to get into great detail here. Even so, we think it's possible to say a few things now about the Persian Wars as the end of a period.

Let's start with ways in which they are indeed exactly that: the end of a period. Clearly, the essay isn't alone and the *OCCC*, too, has 479 BCE as the last date in its discussion of the Archaic period of Greece. There are good reasons. As the *OCCC* points out, the Persian Wars were immensely important to the way the Greeks understood themselves. Overnight almost, they had become the victors over a mighty empire. The essay stresses that often it is only hindsight that makes us see a particular boundary as significant. In the case of the Persian Wars, this wasn't the case – much fifth-century BCE poetry, drama, architecture, oratory and history-writing was to look back at these events as a turning point. You will study various examples in Block 2.

Yet there are some problems:

- 1 There is a problem with the year 479 BCE. Yes, you might say, the Greeks won major military victories in Salamis and Plataea. But this wasn't the end of the Persian Wars: further battles followed later. If you were able to ask an Athenian in the year 478 BCE about the previous year, we suspect he or she would say that a great victory had been won, but that the danger was far from over. In other words, the end of the Persian Wars wasn't short and sharp.

- 2 Even the Persian Wars as a whole, with their drawn-out ending, aren't in all ways the end of an era and the beginning of something new. You may have noticed in the *OCCC* that the Persian Wars were to some degree the result of something called Cleisthenes' democratic reforms (you can look them up under 'Cleisthenes' in the *OCCC* if you're curious, but this isn't necessary for the point here), which in turn were in some ways a follow-on from Solon's reforms. In other words, the new self-confidence and 'restlessness' as the *OCCC* puts it, goes back a long way. The Greek defeat of the Persians, momentous as it was, can also be seen as part of a continuous development. Finally, it is important to remember that all this is from the Greek perspective. To the Persians, these wars were no doubt a painful defeat. But it was a defeat that didn't threaten their core empire in any way. Our sources are weak here, but it is doubtful that, to them, 479 BCE was the boundary of two periods.
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In summary, as soon as you hold a magnifying glass over the boundary of two periods, or indeed over many important historical dates, you find that things get messy. This isn't a reason not to have boundaries. As the essay points out, such boundaries are crucial for structuring and understanding history. But it's equally crucial not to become their slave. Between them, we hope Essay One and the work you have already done on the timelines will provide a foundation for your work throughout the course. We would encourage you to return to them throughout, both to give you a sense of perspective across the ancient world, and to help you think about what it means to say that something happened in a particular year. Finally, once more, we would encourage you to continue customising your timelines.

3.2 Ancient places

In the previous section you have been studying time: now you need to move on to that other great regulator of human activity – place. You may already have a firm grip of the geography of the Mediterranean region and this will give you a head start, but as you will discover, places in the past were not the same as they are now. The course team have prepared a variety of learning materials for you to master the geography of the ancient Mediterranean. The principal means of learning the geography is to use the online ancient geography application accessible from the course eDesktop. Alternatively, if you cannot access the online materials, a set of exercises is provided in Appendix 1 of this introduction, based on the maps to be found at the back of the *OCCC*.

The extent of the Greeks' geographical knowledge of the world can be reconstructed from considering the regions and places mentioned by various authors, notably Herodotus (c.450 BCE). Later, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, rather detailed descriptions of the earth's surface, including the concept of latitude and longitude, were developed in order to fix places in geographical space. If you read the *OCCC* entry for 'geography', you will soon see that the Greeks had quite complex ideas about the subject. However, this is not the place to go into such detail; for now, the important thing is to make sure that you acquire (or refresh) a knowledge of the geography of the Classical world. Knowing where places were, which places were near each other and which were distant, will enrich your exploration of the ancient world. You will be doing this largely through the study of maps, but a few introductory points need to be made before you start.

- 1 A first point is that the conformation of the earth's surface has changed since antiquity. A clear example of change is in coastlines, caused either by rising or falling sea level, or by alluviation – where rivers wash material downstream leading to a filling of valley bottoms and the advance of the coastline into shallow sea areas. In most low-lying areas of the eastern Mediterranean, coastlines have changed as rivers have silted up and coastal lagoons have dried up. Some of this change has natural causes (e.g. earthquakes and volcanic eruptions), but human impact on the environment, particularly deforestation and intensive agriculture, often seems to have led to changes in the landscape. A consequence of this change is that maps of the modern world do not necessarily accurately show the landforms and coasts of the ancient world. This change can be significant. For example, at Thermopylae, the scene of the battle described by Herodotus, is a narrow stretch of land between the mountain and the sea, but now the mountain is at least five kilometres from the sea and up to twenty metres of sediment have been laid down, obscuring the ancient topography and making it impossible to relate the description of the battle to the modern landforms. Generally, scientific investigations of landscape development are needed to detail such changes; in this case drilling in the valley bottom enabled the reconstruction of an approximate coastline in CE 480 (Kraft *et al.*, 1987).
- 2 A second point to remember is that the names of places in the ancient world are usually different from place names in the modern world. So, for example, the site believed to be Troy is at the modern place called Hissarlik. In other cases, the modern name is recognisably related to the ancient name, so the modern Greek place name Sparta is the site of Sparta, Korinthos the site of Corinth and Athinai, Athens. Already a further complication should be evident: for many places there is a commonly used name in the English language. Sparta, Corinth and Athens are all Anglicisations of the ancient Greek place names. As if that was not enough, Greek place names and proper nouns are often 'Latinised' when they are spoken or written without using the Greek alphabet (the Latinisation can be either the name that was current during the Roman empire, or a newly-coined Latinised spelling). Thus our trio of places when Latinised becomes Sparta, Corinthus and Athenae. As mentioned before, we have used Latinised ancient place names unless there is a commonly used Anglicised version.

The geography of the Classical world

We would now like to give you the opportunity to gain some background knowledge of places and regions in the Classical world. The aim is to give you a grasp of this geography so that as you work through the course, you will be able to locate the places you study and put them in relation to one another without having to consult a map all the time.

The course team has developed a set of interactive maps that are available to you on the internet to enable you to gain this knowledge. There are four maps, focusing on different parts of the ancient world. We hope navigating them with mouse clicks will be reasonably intuitive, but if you need it there is a help button that contains the instructions. Go now to the eDesktop, and select 'ICT'. Next, select 'Maps'.



Exercise

We suggest you browse around the different maps first, trying to familiarise yourself with both the ICT resource and the geography. You will see that we have provided a self-testing feature, which should also help you to become familiar with the maps. We suggest that you start using this feature once you feel you have reached a basic level of knowledge, rather than just stare at the maps. You can test yourself on easier or more difficult sets of places. (If you are unable to access the internet, turn to Appendix 1 and try out the paper-based map exercises.)

CMA 51

Once you feel that you have gone as far you wish at this stage in studying the maps, you should do the first computer-marked assignment (CMA 51, in your Assignment Book). The level you will be able to attain at this point depends partly on whether you were familiar with some of these places previously. So don't worry if you are unable to learn all the places in one go. The CMA is there purely for you to assess yourself, and doesn't count towards your final mark. We encourage you to return to the maps whenever you feel it is appropriate throughout the course.

In this introduction to the course, we have aimed to get you started on exploring the Classical world by introducing you to the sources upon which you can build your knowledge and understanding. We have also started your exploration of both time and space in the Classical world. This is only the point of departure; from here you will go on to explore places and time in much more detail and practise more critical analysis of source materials of all types. Good luck with your studies.

References

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Herodotus, *Histories* 1.30 and 7.152, in de Sélincourt, A. (trans.), revised by J. Marincola (2002) *Herodotus: Histories*, London: Penguin.

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Kraft, J.C., Rapp Jr., G., Szemler, G.J., Tziavos, C. and Kase, E.W. (1987) 'The Pass at Thermopylae, Greece', *Journal of Field Archaeology*, vol.14, no.2, pp.181–98.

Appendix 1 Paper-based map exercises

These exercises are alternatives to the online map exercises: only complete these if you cannot access the internet.

Greece

Locate the following places on Map 1 ('Greece and the Aegean World') or Map 2 ('The Hellenistic World') in the *OCCC*. The grid locations are provided to help you locate the places on the map, and all places are on Map 1 unless stated otherwise.



Regions: Macedonia Ba, Thrace Ca, Thessaly Bb, Euboea Bc/Cc, Boetia Bc, Phocis Bc, Attica Cc, Peloponnese Ac/Bc/Bd, Argolis Bc, Arcadia Bc, Messenia Ad/Bd, Laconia Bd, Ionia Dc, Lydia Eb, Phrygia Fb, Caria Ec.

Islands: Cyprus Cc (on Map 2), Crete Ac (on Map 2), Rhodes Ed, Samos Dc, Chios Dc, Lesbos Db, Lemnos Cb, Delos Cc, Naxos Dd, Melos Cd, Aegina Bc, Ithaca Ac, Salamis Bc.

Seas: Ionian (not named on map but west of Greece), Aegean (not named on map but between Greece and Asia Minor), Black Sea Ba/Ca/Bb/Cb (on Map 2), Hellespont Da.

Cities: Sparta Bd, Messene Bd, Olympia Ac, Argos Bc, Mycenae Bc, Corinth Bc, Thebes Bc, Delphi Bc, Athens Cc, Marathon Cc, Troy Db, Mytilene Db, Pergamum Eb, Smyrna Ec, Sardis Ec, Ephesus Ec, Miletus Ec, Plataea Bc.

Rivers: Strymon Ba/Ca, Eurymedon, Maeander Ec.

Mountains and passes: Thermopylae Bc, Olympus Bb, Ida (as in the *BHAG* map), Parnassus Bc, Helicon Bc.

Italy

Locate the following places on Map 3 ('Italy') in the *OCCC*. The grid locations are provided to help you locate the places on the map.



Regions: Latium Bb, Etruria Ab, Sabina (marked as Sabines after the people who lived there) Bb, Campania Bc, Lucania Bc/Cc.

Islands: Corsica Ab, Sardinia Ac, Sicily Bd.

Seas: Tyrrhennian (not named on map but west of Italy and between Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily), Adriatic (not named on map but between Italy and Dalmatia).

Cities: Mediolanum Aa, Verona Aa, Aquileia Ba, Clusium Ab, Cosa Ab, Tarquinii Ab, Ostia Bb, Rome Bb, Capua Bc, Neapolis Bb, Pompeii Bc, Paestum Bc, Elea Bc, Tarantum Cc, Panormus Bd, Selinus Bd, Agrigentum Bd, Gela Bd, Syracuse Bd, Catana Bd.

Rivers: Tiber Bb.

The Mediterranean

Locate the following places on Map 4 ('The Roman Empire (Central and Eastern Provinces)') or Map 5 ('The Roman Empire (Western Provinces)') in the *OCCC*. The grid locations are provided to help you locate the places on the map.



Cities: Carthage Ac (on Map 4), Alexandria Dd (on Map 4), Antioch Ec (on Map 4), Byzantium Db (on Map 4), Sardis Dc, Massilia Cc (on Map 5), Lugdunum Cc (on Map 5), Londinium Cb (on Map 5), Narbo Bc (on Map 5), Tarraco Bc (on Map 5), Carthago Nova Bd (on Map 5), Augusta Emerita Ad (on Map 5).

Appendix 2 General timeline

1600–1150 BCE	Mycenaean civilisation in Greece.
c.1250 BCE	Traditional date of the Trojan War.
900–800 BCE	Homer active. Greek alphabet created from Phoenician models.
753 BCE	Traditional date of the founding of Rome.
509 BCE	Founding of the Roman Republic.
508 BCE	Cleisthenes' reforms in Athens. Often taken as the start date for democracy.
490 and 480–79 BCE	Persian invasions of mainland Greece defeated.
431–04 BCE	Peloponnesian War: Sparta eventually defeats Athens.
399 BCE	Trial and execution of Socrates.
359–36 BCE	Philip II is King of Macedon. Eventually defeats Athens and Thebes.
336–23 BCE	Alexander ('the Great') is King of Macedon. Greatly increases his kingdom.
300–100 BCE	Alexandria is prominent centre of learning in the Greek world.
295 BCE	Battle of Sentinum: Romans defeat Etruscans, Umbrians and Gauls and so dominate Italy.
264–41 BCE	First Punic War: Rome against Carthage.
218–01 BCE	Second Punic War: Carthaginians led by Hannibal ravage Italy.
149–46 BCE	Third Punic War.
146 BCE	Macedonia becomes Roman province. Corinth is destroyed by the Romans. Carthage is destroyed by the Romans.
121 BCE	Murder of Gaius Gracchus.
88–82 BCE	Civil war between Marius and Sulla.
49 BCE	Julius Caesar starts a civil war by crossing the Rubicon.
44 BCE	Julius Caesar murdered (15 March).
31 BCE	Octavian defeats Antony and Cleopatra at Actium and becomes sole ruler.
27 BCE	Octavian receives title Augustus.
CE 14	Tiberius becomes second Emperor.
CE 69	Civil war: 'the year of the four emperors' ends with Vespasian victorious.
CE 79	Eruption of Mt Vesuvius destroys Pompeii and Herculaneum.
CE 98–117	Trajan is Emperor.
CE 117–38	Hadrian is Emperor.
CE 235–84	'Third century crisis': a period of anarchy.
CE 284–305	Diocletian is Emperor.
CE 306–37	Constantine I is Emperor.
CE 410	Sack of Rome by the Goths.

Arts: Level 2

A219 Exploring the Classical World



The Open University

Front cover image: Temple of Hera II or Apollo, Paestum, Italy

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